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THE
FIRST AIR VOYAGE
IN AMERICA

JANUARY 9, 1793
BLANCHARD

Presented to

Industrial Technology

by Erik Hilde Heim
of Fairfield, Conn.

in memory of
Ransom Matthews



The First Air Voyage in America
—woodcut by Charles R. Gardner, 1931. ©

THE FIRST AIR VOYAGE
IN AMERICA

The Times, the Place, and the People *of*
The Blanchard Balloon Voyage of
January 9, 1793,
Philadelphia to Woodbury

Together with a fac simile reprinting of the
JOURNAL
of MY FORTY-FIFTH ASCENSION
AND THE FIRST IN AMERICA
by JEAN PIERRE BLANCHARD

Published by
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Balloon Ascension on the 150th Anniversary

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P R E F A C E

by

JOHN A. STEVENSON

President

The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company

IT was just a century and a half ago that aviation in America had its real beginning in the flight of Jean Pierre Blanchard. Today, when aeronautical developments determine the fate of nations, it is appropriate to look back to that historic moment when flying was introduced to this country as a means of transportation.

The hydrogen-filled balloon, which, in 1793, ascended from a Philadelphia prison yard to make a fifteen-mile flight, bore little resemblance to the giant airliners which now circle the globe. In spite of the technical advances that lie between, however, there can be no question that those who watched the experiments of Blanchard and his contemporaries saw "the shape of things to come."

"T'other night," Horace Walpole wrote, as, in 1784, he watched a Blanchard balloon flight in England, "I diverted myself with a sort of meditation on future airgation, supposing it will not only be perfected, but will depose navigation." The "ship news" of the future he saw in this form: "The good balloon, Daedalus, Captain Wingate, will fly in a few days for China. He will stop at the Monument to take in passengers."

The idea that the balloon might "possibly give a new turn to human affairs" was also expressed by Benjamin Franklin who witnessed the first Paris ascension. When a skeptic took occasion to ask "what good could a balloon be?" Franklin's reply was "what good is a new-born baby?"

"Convincing sovereigns of the folly of wars may perhaps be one effect of it," said Franklin in commenting on the new invention, "since it will be impracticable for the most potent of them to guard his dominions. Five thousand balloons, capable of raising two men each, could not cost more than five ships of the line; and where is the prince who can afford so to cover his country with troops for its defense as that ten thousand men descending from the clouds might not in many places do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?"

The Penn Mutual's special interest in the First Air Voyage in America arises from the fact that the ascension was made from the spot where our Home Office now stands. A plaque has been placed in the corridor of our building to mark the historic site.

THE FIRST AIR VOYAGE IN AMERICA

by CARROLL FREY

ON January 9, 1793, from the yard of the old Walnut Street Prison in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Jean Pierre Blanchard began the first air voyage in America. In the presence of President George Washington and a great assembly, the aeronaut ascended in a hydrogen balloon, carrying a passport of introduction from Washington, the first air-borne letter in the New World. The only passenger with Blanchard was a small black dog. The balloon reached a maximum altitude of 5812 feet traveled 15 miles in 46 minutes, and landed in a woods a little to the eastward of Woodbury, in New Jersey.

Fortunately it is possible to obtain a first-hand account of the adventure from the best possible authority, the aeronaut himself. Blanchard's "Journal of My Forty-Fifth Ascension, Being the First Performed in America," was published in Philadelphia in the year of the flight. Since copies of the book have long since become rarities treasured in occasional research libraries, it is here reprinted in its entirety.

But before we read Blanchard's account of the voyage itself, let us first introduce the star of the drama and set the stage for him by learning something of the place and time in which the voyage began.

Jean Pierre Blanchard came to Philadelphia with a well-earned reputation as "the greatest of the early aeronauts,"—certainly he had already done more than any other early aviator to popularize the art and science of flying.

He was a citizen of France, born in Andelys. He was something of an inventive genius and a student of the flight of birds; he was possessed with an ambition to have their skill matched by man. As early as 1781 he had invented and constructed a flying machine on the ornithopter principle, with four great wings operated by hand and foot levers. This "Vaisseau Volant" was unsuccessful in operation because, apart from any other lack, the motive power was insufficient, as scoffing academicians argued with him. Blanchard continued to experiment in various directions, never quite lost faith in his dream of wings.

Other inventors of the time were obsessed with the idea of flight, most of them working along the direction of a craft lighter than air, and finally, in 1783, Joseph and Jacques Etienne Montgolfier of France produced the hot-air balloon. On September 18, 1783, before King Louis XVI and Queen Marie

Antoinette and the royal court of France, the Montgolfier balloon ascended, carrying a sheep, a cock, and a duck; it rose to a height of 1500 feet, traveled two miles in eight minutes, and thus captured the honors for the first aerial voyage in history. Two months later came the first ascent of human beings, when Jean Francois Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes rose in the Montgolfier balloon in Paris, and all Europe went wild in a craze for aeronautics as a score of balloonists began giving exhibitions of the new sensation. Among these was Blanchard.

Anyone interested in reading of the colorful days of early aeronauts will find its history splendidly narrated and illustrated in Francis T. Miller's two volumes on "The World in the Air," published in 1930 by Putnam's.

Before long America saw attempts to fly in balloons. Carnes attempted an ascension in Philadelphia in 1784, but as did Deeker in New York met with disaster. In the same year Carnes raised a captive balloon in Baltimore. The so-called flight of Wilcox in Philadelphia was a hoax originating abroad. But the fascination for the idea of flight remained, and it was not until Blanchard came to America that the public demand for the sight of a real air voyage was satisfied in the New World.

During the decade following the introduction of aerostatics in Europe, no man con-

tributed so much activity in aerial navigation as did Jean Pierre Blanchard—not the first in the start, he was the first in the pursuit. He did everything he could do to satisfy the thirst of the people throughout Europe for exhibitions of the new science. He made the first balloon ascension in Germany, at Frankfurt-am-Main, flew in Hamburg, Nuremberg, Leipzig, Berlin, Breslau, Warsaw, Vienna, in all made forty-four flights in Europe before his first in America. His greatest triumph was the first crossing of the English channel, with Dr. John Jefferies of Boston. That daring and hazardous journey was the first air voyage between nations, was comparable to the first trans-Atlantic crossing. It was called “the eighth wonder of the world.” There were eight more years of Blanchard flights before he came to America.

While he lived his year in Philadelphia his name in the entry into the city directory was unusual: “Blanchard, ——— the celebrated aeronaut, 9, N. 8th Street.” As a matter of fact his name in the newspapers of that time was always “Mr. Blanchard” or “M. Blanchard” or just plain “Blanchard;” he himself almost invariably mononymized his name; he was “Blanchard,” and so it appears in his Journal, and so he signed his name; but underneath the engraved frontispiece you will note the identification, “Mr. J. P. Blanchard,”

*A Portrait of Jean Pierre Blanchard, by M. E.
Wigfield, after the 1785 engraving by I. Sewel.
Fac simile of Blanchard's mononymized signature.*



Mancharef

and the full name “Jean Pierre Blanchard” appears on the contemporary engraved portraits. Curiously enough, various British, French, and American encyclopaedias refer to him as “Francois Blanchard.”

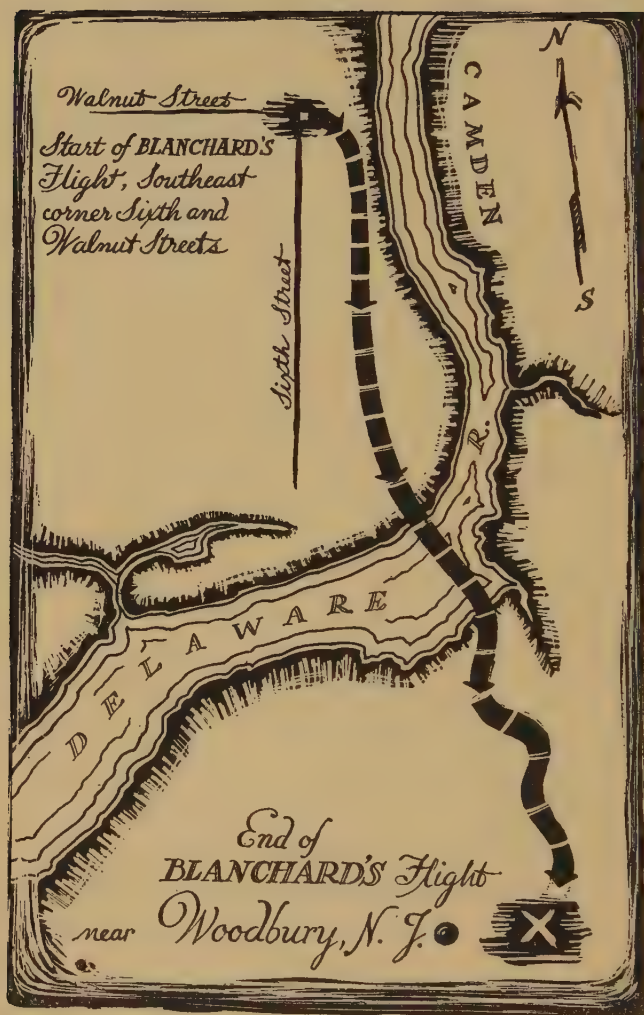
Here is the report of the first air voyage in America as it appeared on January 10, 1793, in *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*, as seen in the collection of the Historical Society of Philadelphia:—

“Mr. Blanchard the bold Aeronaut, agreeably to his advertisement, at five minutes past ten o'clock yesterday morning rose with a balloon from the Prison Court in this city, in preference to an immense concourse of spectators, there assembled on the occasion. The process of inflating the balloon commenced about nine o'clock.—Several cannon were fired from the dawn of day until the moment of elevation,—a band of music played during the time of inflating, and when it began to rise, the majestic sight was truly awful and interesting,—the slow movement of the band, added solemnity to the scene. Indeed the attention of the multitude was so absorbed, that it was a considerable time e'er silence was broke by the acclamations which succeeded.

“As soon as the clock had struck

to every thing being punctually ready, Mr. Blanchard took a respectful leave of all the spectators, and received from the hands of the President a paper, at the same time the President spoke a few words to this bold adventurer, who immediately leap'd into his boat which was painted blue and spangled; the balloon was of a yellowish color'd-silk highly varnished, over which there was a strong net work—Mr. Blanchard was dressed in a plain blue suit, a cock'd hat and white feathers. As soon as he was in the boat, he threw out some ballast, and the balloon began to ascend slowly and perpendicularly, whilst Mr. Blanchard waved the colours of the United States and also those of the French Republic, and flourished his hat to the thousands of citizens from every part of the country who stood gratified and astonished at his intrepidity. After a few minutes, the wind blowing from the northward and westward, the balloon rose to an immense heighth and then shaped its course toward the southward and eastward. Several Gentlemen gallop'd down the point road, but soon lost sight of it, for it moved at the rate of 20 miles an hour.

A Map of the First Air Voyage in America, by M. E. Wigfield, after a map by Erwin L. Schwatt, aviator. The certificate of descent given to Blanchard gave the distance as "about fifteen miles from Philadelphia" to Woodbury. They probably estimated the distance by the carriage roads. A homing pigeon would fly it in about nine miles. But Blanchard's air voyage was not straight.



“Great numbers who had neglected to purchase tickets were afflicted with considerable regret, at not having been immediately present in the prison court to see the preparations, and to witness the undaunted countenance of the man who thus sublimely dared to soar through the regions of the air. And it is reported that a number of ladies and gentlemen intend to open another and more extensive subscription at Ollers’s, to indemnify Mr. Blanchard for the expences he has incurred, which it is said are exceedingly greater than the amount of the first subscription.

“Anxiety for the safety of the Aeronaut was painted on every face from the time the citizens lost sight of him, and various were the conjectures as to the place where he would descend.

“About half after 6 o’clock last evening we were happy to meet Mr. Blanchard again in this city going to pay his respects to the President of the United States.—He informed us, that this aerial voyage lasted forty-six minutes, in which time he ran over a space of more than 15 miles and then descended a little to the eastward of Woodbury in the state of New Jersey—where he took a carriage and returned

to Cooper's ferry—and was at the President's, as we have already mentioned at half past 6 o'clock last evening.

We know from Blanchard's own Journal how he was received when his balloon landed near Woodbury, ending the air voyage. There is also a sidelight to be found in the Diary of Samuel Mickle of Woodbury, edited by Frank H. Stewart for the Gloucester County Historical Society:—

“1793. 1/8. Made some preparations to visit Philada. tomorrow morning. Having forgot ye report of a Balloon intended to be raised there tomorrow A. M. by Blanchard until my wife being reminded of it at our neighbor Aaron Thompson's, came home and told me this evening. Also that all of Woodbury almost was going to see it, which appeared likely to obstruct my business with some people there, have postponed going there.

“1/9. Great ado with looking for and at the Balloon which came, I suppose, within one mile from and eastward of us at Woodbury, and perhaps one-half mile in height. This is an instance of the body also as well as the mind being in ye air. Balloon is ye subject in almost every quarter.”

Blanchard had come to America from

Hamburg, says his Journal, "upon the ship *Ceres*, Captain Marsh, bound to Philadelphia. —On the 30th of September, 1792, we sailed, and landed here on the 9th of December, in the same year." He was then forty years of age.

It was at an inflammatory time in his native country, for the French Revolution was on, and France had just been declared a republic. Blanchard found in Philadelphia intense partisan interest in the struggle for "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite," for there were numerous Frenchmen in the town, and native Americans were taking sides, some remembering the King's friendship for young America, others flaunting the red liberty cap and calling one another "Citizen." It was twelve days after Blanchard's air voyage that King Louis XVI's head fell under the guillotine. A few months later, Citizen Edmond Charles Genet came to replace de Ternant as Minister Plenipotentiary, was arrogant and demanding, stirred up the partisanship, and in general was so embarrassing to the United States Government that it had to request his withdrawal.

Blanchard had previously found himself a prisoner in the fortress of Kufstein because of his political interest, but his distinction as an aeronaut had earned him the right to be a pensioner of his country. Here in America he managed to keep himself out of the politics.

He had enough to worry about. His problem was financial, as we shall see.

The Philadelphia that our French aeronaut had come to was a city of some 9,000 houses, of from 40,000 to 50,000 people. The 1791 census had reported 6,651 houses and 44,996 people, but in the two years some 3,000 houses had been added. Since most of the houses were builded of brick, Philadelphia was known as "the red city."

"The number of inhabitants in the United States," said the city directory of that year, "agreeably to the census taken in the year 1791 in conformity to Act of Congress, totaled 3,929,326—of whom 697,655 were slaves." The population of Pennsylvania was 434,373, of whom 3,737 were slaves.

In the year 1793 Philadelphia was the capital of the United States as well as the capital of Pennsylvania.

That fact accounted for a remarkable distinction for what today is known as Independence Square and then was known as the State House Yard. In its one small row of buildings, State House Row along Chestnut Street, were the seats of government of the city, the county, the state, and the union.

In the center was the State House (Independence Hall) with its wings, the capitol of the State of Pennsylvania; to the west, at the Sixth Street corner, was the County Hall,

at that time serving as the capitol of the United States; and to the east, at the Fifth Street corner, was the City Hall, then housing the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Executive Mansion of 1793 was the Morris House, a red brick building at Sixth and High or Market. The house used as the office of the Secretary of State was at the northwest corner of Eighth and High. The office of the Secretary of the Treasury was at the southwest corner of Third and Chestnut. The United States Treasurer's office was at 71 Chestnut on the north side between Second and Third. The office of Secretary of War was at the southeast corner of Fifth and Chestnut. The Attorney General was at 21 Vine Street. The Office of Foreign Affairs was in the house of Peter Duponceau, at approximately the northeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut. The office of the Auditor General, was at 61 Chestnut. The Post Office was at 9 South Water Street, and the Custom House at the southeast corner of Second and Walnut. The office used to settle accounts between Federal and State governments was at 52 North Fourth Street, above Arch. This of course is old style numbering.

Of the last above-mentioned group of government buildings not one is still standing today. But today, 150 years later, we can walk along the streets of the original part of Phila-

delphia and still see many of the other buildings that Blanchard saw in his day: the whole group of State House Row, that is Independence Hall and Congress Hall and the Supreme Court Building, with the American Philosophical Society building behind it; and many of the churches: Christ Church and St. Peter's; St. Mary's and Holy Trinity, Old Swede's, St. George's, Zion Lutheran, Old Pine Street Presbyterian, the Free Quaker's Meeting House; a few of the old houses, Dolly Madison's and General Moylan's and the Powell house, the Wistar house; the Pennsylvania Hospital; and many other buildings further out.

When the provincial fathers planned and made the State House Yard they ordained that it should "remain a public green and walk forever." Much as it was in 1793 it is today, a rendezvous for public gatherings; "it will forever echo with the voices and footsteps of great men."

Across Independence Square or the State House Yard, and a block south of the State House, at the southeast corner of Sixth and Walnut Streets, was the Walnut Street Prison, from whose courtyard Blanchard began his historic air voyage. The principal populated part of the city of Philadelphia was within a very few blocks of this governmental center, for the populated city was like a triangle with its base along the Delaware River, from Vine

Street on the north to South Street on the south, and the third point at about Twelfth Street.

Most of the time during the past twenty years, Philadelphia had been the center of American government. The Continental Congress had first convened in Carpenters Hall, in 1775, later met in the State House through the years of the American Revolution, except for the interval when Howe's British Army had held the city. Here in the State House Congress had commissioned General George Washington as commander in chief of the American forces, the Congress had declared Independence in 1776, in 1778 had adopted the Articles of Confederation, and here the Federal Constitution, 1787, had been drafted and adopted by the Federal Convention. Thus there had been enacted in this city the greatest part of the entire drama of the birth of the new nation, and here, in 1790, after a short stay in New York, the United States of America had set up its capital for ten years, until the city of Washington was made ready.

Who were the people who in 1793 saw the first air voyage in America?

Apparently every person who lived in Philadelphia at that time, plus quite a few visitors from out of town. Several subscribers wrote to the newspaper open letters in which they asked Blanchard not to set too early a

date, "so that those at a distance in the country journeying to town would not want an opportunity of procuring tickets of admission." The exhibition had been well advertised and was on every tongue. The newspapers warmed to the intense public interest before, during, and after the day. On the day of the ascension two cannon were fired every quarter hour by Captain Fisher's company of artillery; and fifteen cannon on the arrival of the President. As the hour approached, a brass band played. It was probably the most spectacular event in the town's history up to that time, for the balloon, once it had risen from the prison yard, was clearly visible from every settled part of the city and from points for miles around.

In the *Journal* the aeronaut says, "Accustomed as I have long been to the pompous scenes of numerous assemblies, yet I could not help being surprised and astonished when, elevated at a certain height over the city, I turned my eyes towards the immense number of people, which covered the open places, the roofs of the houses, the steeples, the streets and the roads . . . What a sight!"

Blanchard's *Journal* specifically mentions as present in the courtyard General George Washington, President of the United States, and Monsieur John de Ternant, the French Minister Plenipotentiary.

There were many very distinguished persons resident in Philadelphia, for the national seat of government was there, and Congress was in session. John Adams was Vice-President of the United States and Thomas Jefferson was Secretary of State and ex officio Commissioner for the Granting of Patents. It is probable that five men who became Presidents of the United States, each in his time, were in Blanchard's audience: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe. Monroe was a Senator from Virginia. Madison was a Representative from Virginia.

Alexander Hamilton was Secretary of the Treasury; Edmond Randolph was Attorney General; Timothy Pickering was Postmaster General; Henry Knox was Secretary of War. In the Judiciary of the United States was John Jay of New York, Chief Justice, and the Associate Justices were William Cushing of Massachusetts, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, John Blair of Virginia, James Iredel of North Carolina, William Patterson of New Jersey.

Nathaniel Falconer was Chief Warden of the Port and Health Officer; Sharp Delany was Collector of Customs; Oliver Wolcot, jun., was Comptroller; Richard Harrison, Esq., was Auditor; Joseph Nourse was Register; Samuel Meredith was Treasurer; Tenche Coxe was Commissioner of Revenue.

Senators from the fifteen states were:

Aaron Burr and Rufus King for New York; Robert Morris and Albert Gallatin for Pennsylvania; John Langdon and Samuel Livermore for New Hampshire; George Cabot and Caleb Strong for Massachusetts; Bradford and Theodore Foster for Rhode Island; Oliver Elsworth and Roger Sherman for Connecticut; Stephen R. Bradley and Moses Robinson for Vermont; John Rutherford and Frederic Frelinghuysen for New Jersey; George Read and John Vining for Delaware; John Henry and Richard Potts for Maryland; John Brown and John Edwards for Kentucky; Benjamin Hawkins and Alexander Martin for North Carolina; Pierce Butler and Ralph Izard for South Carolina; James Gunn and James Jackson for Georgia; and James Monroe for Virginia. The Speaker of the House was Jonathan Trumbull, the man who painted the celebrated picture of the Adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

Thomas Mifflin was Governor of Pennsylvania, and Matthew Clarkson was Mayor of Philadelphia.

Here at the capital of the United States, Spain had Don Joseph De Vier and Don Joseph De Vaudennes as Commissioners, Great Britain George Hammond as Minister Plenipotentiary, France John de Ternant as Minister Plenipotentiary, the United Netherlands Francis Van Berckel as Minister Resident,

Sweden Richard Soderstrom as Consul, Portugal Ignatius Palyart as Consul General, Prussia Charles Godfred Poleske as Consul General, Joseph Ravara was Consul General of Genoa. Except for several consuls, these were the diplomatic corps.

On the day after Christmas, thirteen days before the air voyage, a deputation of red Indian chiefs came to Philadelphia to pay their respects to the Federal government, to give an exhibition of war-dances, and to be entertained. They remained in town at least three weeks, and it is not likely that they would miss seeing the raising of the white man's newest magic, the balloon. Among these Indians were Red Trowsers, Great Joseph, Painted Face, Rising Man, Little Beaver, and Little Elk. The newspapers reported that during their stay, out of over forty sachems and squaws, five succumbed to the small pox, "two naturally, and three by inoculation."

There were at least three famous women who must have viewed the balloon ascension. One was Martha Washington, another Dolly Madison, and the other Betsy Ross. All three lived in Philadelphia in 1793, although of the three only Mrs. Washington held that name then.

In the 1793 directory is listed John Todd, Esq., attorney at law, 51 South Fourth Street; but he died that year when the yellow fever

came to town, and the next year "Todd, Dorothy, widow" is listed as the head of the house. It was there at 51 South Fourth Street that Senator Aaron Burr introduced his friend Representative James Madison, who in 1794 married Mrs. Todd, and Dolly Madison became the most popular first lady ever to grace the White House in Washington.

You won't find the name of Betsy Ross in the 1793 city directory, but you will find John Claypoole, an upholsterer who lived at 72 South Second Street. His wife Elizabeth was the former Betsy Ross, and long after his death she was still making flags for the United States government.

Joshua Humphreys was another Philadelphian of national note; he was the shipwright who as marine architect had designed and fitted out the first fleet of the Continental Navy, and he was the designer of the *Constitution* and the *Constellation*. William Rush, the first notable American sculptor, was working in his native Philadelphia; he was best known for his wood carvings used as ship figureheads.

Henry Voight, chief coiner of the Mint, had had John Fitch as a clock repairer at his own shop on Second Street, the John Fitch who had first applied steam to navigation on the Delaware. Three days before Blanchard's balloon triumph, Fitch wrote to Rittenhouse

of the steamboat, "This, sir, will be the mode of crossing the Atlantic in time, whether I shall bring it to perfection or not."

Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, engineer of the United States, was living and working in Philadelphia, planning the capital city of Washington.

William Cobbett was writing, and later was to become celebrated for his barbed "Peter Porcupine" pamphlets. Philip Freneau, the poet of the Revolution, was clerk for foreign languages under Secretary of State Jefferson, and was editing the *National Gazette* as an irritant to the Federalists.

Colonel John Nixon, President of the Bank of North America, was famous in Philadelphia for numerous reasons, not the least of which was that his had been the voice "powerful enough to be heard half a block" and therefore used, back on July 8, 1776, to read the newly adopted Declaration of Independence to Philadelphians assembled in the State House Yard.

The greatest Philadelphian of all, Benjamin Franklin, had died three years before, and his grave in the cemetery of Christ Church, at Fifth and Arch Streets, in 1793 was as it is today, a shrine visited by all of the infinite variety who admired Poor Richard.

When Blanchard was in Philadelphia, he walked streets policed and paved and cleaned and lighted by municipal departments which

had been instituted by the indefatigable Franklin, as had the first fire-fighting companies and fire insurance companies; and he saw houses protected by Franklin's invention the lightning rod.

In his Journal, Blanchard names a number of local scientists who assisted him in his preparations for the flight: Dr. Wistar, Dr. Rush, Dr. Glentworth, Peter Legaux, Dr. Nassy, Benjamin Franklin Bache. Dr. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Clinical Cases at the University of Pennsylvania and Dr. Caspar Wistar was Adjunct Professor of Anatomy; Benjamin Franklin Bache, the editor, was a grandson of Benjamin Franklin.

Three other Philadelphians who never would have missed such an interesting event were David Rittenhouse, the astronomer, who was Director of the United States Mint; the versatile Peter Duponceau; and Charles Willson Peale, famous painter and amateur of the sciences, owner of the Peale Museum. We know that Peale, Humphreys, Rush, Nones, had been among the subscribers for the unfortunate Carnes attempted ascension. And no doubt the Right Reverend Bishop William White, D. D., of Christ Church, was present to give his blessing to an event sponsored by his parishioner, President Washington.

The diarist Jacob Hiltzheimer of Philadelphia was present; he was one of the many people Blanchard saw on the roofs. His diary entry for January 9, 1793 said that he was with a party of daughters and friends who went to the roof of a small building at the southeast corner of Ninth and Market Streets to watch Blanchard "take his aerial flight." Hiltzheimer mentions the firing of the cannon in the prison yard, and says that that evening he heard of the aeronaut's landing near Woodbury.

On looking through the city directory of Philadelphia for 1793, in the library of the American Philosophical Society, it is intriguing to read the trades represented by the persons named. Many of these businesses listed, of course, are just such as are continued to this day: cabinet maker, segar maker, tobacconist, bookseller, blacksmith, flour dealer, butcher, etc. (As a matter of fact, over a score of the business houses then listed as in Philadelphia were still active a century and a half later.)

The names of other trades listed remind us that Philadelphia was from its beginnings a great seaport: sea captain, mariner, wharffinger, shipwright, pilot, rope maker, sail maker, ship joiner, block maker, ship chandler, boat builder, rigger, wharf builder, waterman, shallopman, stevedore, mast maker.

Other trades convey the color of that

period: whitesmith, cedar cooper, coachman, spinning wheel maker, surgeon barber, windsor chair maker, gunsmith, breeches maker, apothecary, scrivener, tin man, ginger bread maker, coach painter, vendue crier, hair powder manufacturer, grazier, harness maker, limner, coach trimmer, powderer, hairdresser, mantua maker, millwright and millstone manufacturer, mahogany sawyer, victualler, tallow candler, stay maker, whalebone cutter, parchment maker, corder of wood, chimney sweep, and gentleman.

All these tradesmen are interesting because they were part of Blanchard's audience; they helped form the "immense concourse of spectators." The first name listed in the Philadelphia directory of 1793 was Abbot, a currier; the last name listed was Zimmerman, a cordwainer. And toward the end, among the W's, sandwiched between the names of "Wartman, Adam, merchant, 169, N. Third St.," and "Wassem, Christopher, labourer, 23, Vernon St.," one finds "Washington, George, President of the United States, 190, High Street."

He was living in the rented house of Robert Morris, at approximately the southeast corner of Sixth and High (Market) Streets; and back of that capacious red brick house were the stables wherein were kept the six white horses and the white coach in which the President rode about the city.

There are other notable names in that

directory. One is that of Stephen Decatur, sea captain; another is that of Tobias Lear, Secretary to the President; another, the singularly apt name of Dr. Physick, physician, who was considered the father of surgery in this country.

Stephen Girard, the mariner and merchant, lived on Water Street, down near the river. French-born himself, he always took a friendly interest in visiting Frenchmen. The year 1793 was to be the year in which he first became well known because with Peter Helm he did heroic work at the pest-house during the yellow fever epidemic. One of those who died that summer of the yellowjack was Joseph Wright, the limner who had engraved the "Wright Type" portraits of Washington.

The city had three banks, the Bank of the United States, in Carpenter's Hall at that time; the Bank of North America, and the Bank of Pennsylvania. There were four insurance companies which had started insurance in America:—the Philadelphia Contributionship for Ensuring Houses from Loss by Fire, the Mutual Assurance Company, the Insurance Company of North America, and The Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers and of the Poor and Distressed Widows and Children of Presbyterian Ministers. Over 20 volunteer fire-fighting companies not only protected the city from the hazards of flame but also

contributed a somewhat bellicose sociability. The insurance companies' firemarks of the hand-in-hand, the green tree, and the eagle were familiar on the buildings of 1793, as indeed they still are, one hundred and fifty years later. In those days they were displayed to call the firemen's attention to the insured houses. The point is that a fire insurance company would help finance a fire-fighting company, and therefore have reason to expect a little preferred attention.

The Pennsylvania Hospital, not far to the southwest from the Walnut Street Prison, had (and still has) the distinction of having been the oldest hospital in America. A glimpse of its record from 1756 to 1793 according to the city directory, reveals that the hospital had admitted 8,608 patients; discharged cured 5,435; relieved 925; removed at the request of friends or sent to the house of employ 411; incurable 119; eloped or discharged for irregular behavior 525; died 1,140. About that time it housed 53, "of whom 38 are on pay and 15 poor, and 34 are lunatics." "Private persons pay from 10 shillings and 35 shillings per week as they and the managers can agree." Since 1787 there had been a College of Physicians.

The Christ Church Hospital was for aged women of the Protestant Episcopal Church. There was a Philadelphia Dispensary on Chestnut Street.

In 1793 Philadelphia had a fair start to her later claim to be the city of churches: the directory listed a Baptist Church, German Calvinist Church, two Protestant Episcopal Churches, two German Lutheran Churches, a Swedish Lutheran Church, a Jewish Synagogue, two Methodist Churches, a Moravian Church, four Presbyterian Churches, a Scots Presbyterian Church, three Roman Catholic Churches; the Universalists had a congregation; and there were four Meeting Houses of the Society of Friends, and in addition the Free Friends' Meeting House. "There is likewise now building a church for the Africans and their descendants, in Fifth between Walnut and Spruce."

There were listed eight Masonic Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, one of them named for Washington.

Since 1780 there had been The Humane Society "not only for the original purpose of endeavoring to restore to life those who were supposed dead from drowning but also such as were in the same situation from any other circumstances such as exposure to heat or cold, drinking cold water, damps, lightening, suffocation from charcoal, &c." In view of their Society's purposes, naturally the members anxiously attended the ascension. Almost anything could happen.

National societies included the St. Andrew's Society, German Incorporated Society, St. George's Society, Hibernian Society, French Benevolent Society, French Patriotic Society, Democratic Society, Society of the Cincinnati, this last being for former officers of the Continental Army.

There were also a Philadelphia society for Promoting Agriculture, a Mutual Benefit Society, Ship Master's Society, Caledonian Society, the Friendly Society, Providence Society, and Franklin Society, this last for printers.

And there was, of course, the American Philosophical Society, "Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge," which had had its origin in Franklin's Junto, a society "formed of virtuosi, or ingenious men residing in the several colonies." The home of the Society then (as now) was in the State House Yard, less than a block from the Prison. And since the members were distinguished in the fields of science we may be sure that many of them were alert to the opportunity of Blanchard's experiment. David Rittenhouse was their President that year, and Thomas Jefferson and Dr. Caspar Wistar, his successors in the chair, were then members.

Philadelphia in Blanchard's year had several notable schools. One was the University of Pennsylvania. There was the Episcopal Academy. And there were the African Schools,

as the directory explains, kept by the Society of Friends and the Abolition Society “who have been exerting themselves with success to ameliorate the situation of the unfortunate Africans; they have also extended their beneficence to their children, for whose education they have made ample provision. The school is kept in Willing’s Alley. The boys are taught by Daniel Britt and the girls by his wife. There is also a school for the blacks, supported by the Abolition Society in Cherry Street, kept by Helena Harris, a black woman of considerable parts, who had been for several years employed as a teacher of white children in England.” (These quotations are from the city directory of 1793.)

The Abolition Society was “for promoting the abolition of slavery and the relief of free negroes unlawfully held in bondage.”

There was a “Society for the Institution and Support of First Day or Sunday Schools in the City of Philadelphia and the Districts of Southwark and the Northern Liberties.”

There was the Library Company of Philadelphia, with its library founded by Benjamin Franklin back in 1731.

The Mint of the United States, at 29 N. Seventh St., was minting “gold coins: eagles, half eagles, quarter eagles; silver coins: dollars or units, each of the value of a Spanish milled dollar, half dollars, quarter dollars, dimes,

half dimes; copper coins: cents and half cents.’” At least that minting was authorized, although the Mint was still very young. It is thought that its first silver coins were made from tableware silver provided by President Washington.

The Post Office announced “of the postage of letters, for the postage of any single letter to or from any place by land not exceeding 30 miles, 6 cents . . . and from every place more than 450 miles, 25 cents. The mail stage sets off at one o’clock P. M. from Mr. Anderson’s at the sign of the Sorrel Horse, carries only four passengers and arrives at New York in 21 hours after its departure. The fare for each passenger in these stages is four dollars. And four pence per mile for way passengers. A New York packet boat . . . starts on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays . . . The fare for each passenger is two dollars.’” The packet boat passengers changed to carriages at Bordentown or Burlington, to South Amboy, from there to another packet, to New York.

There were four stages for New York, the other three starting from the Indian Queen, the City Tavern, the George Tavern. There was a stage from the George Tavern for Baltimore three days a week, fare one guinea; a Lancaster stage twice a week from the Spread Eagle; and on six days a week the Bethlehem stage left at the sign of the Stage Wagon.

On the day that Blanchard landed in Philadelphia on the brig *Ceres*, eight ships cleared the port: the ship *John Bulkley* sailed for Lisbon; the brig *Nancy* for North Carolina; the schooner *Friendship* for New York; the schooners *Franklin*, *Shillelah*, and *Lydia*, sailed for the West Indies; the sloop *Rebecca* for Maryland; and the sloop *Hope* for Perth Amboy.



The Walnut Street Prison, from the yard of which Blanchard made his historic flight, had a curious history of its own. A special issue of paper currency had been printed in 1775 "According to an act of General Assembly of Pennsylvania, passed in the 15th year of the Reign of His Majesty George the Third," for the purpose of raising money with which to build the prison. Each note

carried a picture of the gaol, and, in red ink below the picture (upside down) the words "To Counterfeit Is DEATH."

The Prison extended along Sixth Street from Walnut Street to Prune (Locust) Street, with a separate Debtors' Apartment at the Prune Street end.

The building was still incomplete in 1775 when the Revolutionary authorities in the State House a block away, made use of its storage space to keep gunpowder and other munitions. The first prisoners entered the gaol in January of 1776; they included felons, debtors, prisoners of war, and Tories, one of whom was booked as having been caught "wishing that the Continental gunpowder wagons would blow up."

When the British Army entered the city of Philadelphia in 1777, they released the Tories and British prisoners and making it the British Provost Prison filled the gaol with Americans captured at the Battles of Brandywine and Germantown. The next year the enemy left the city, and Continental troops coming in from Valley Forge once again turned the tables.

Beginning with its very first night, when six prisoners celebrated its opening by escaping, the gaol was notorious for escapes and escapades. It alternated in its record for notoriety and fame. In 1778 its reputation was so

unsavory that a reform was started. The Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Ministerium and the Society of Friends founded the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, the oldest prison reform group in the world and still active today as the Pennsylvania Prison Society. The work the Society did in suggesting and instituting changes, principally by installing workshops and decent management, was so successful that the Walnut Street Prison became a model gaol and its reputation so commendable as to bring earnest visitors there from other cities to study the system. And yet—so the story went—on the first occasion when the newly organized society's representatives had arrived at the gaol, in 1787, ready to hold a church service, the clergymen found a cannon standing before a pulpit, with a gunner standing by with a lighted taper, ready to fire if trouble should be started.

By 1793, when Blanchard's ascension was made from the prison yard, it was a model prison. During the yellow fever epidemic, a number of the men prisoners voluntarily worked as nurses at the pest house, while women prisoners gave up their bedding for hospital use.

One of Blanchard's probable audience was Robert Morris, United States Senator from Pennsylvania, signer of the Declaration of Independence and the financier of the Revolu-

tion. Five years later Morris became a prisoner in the debtors' apartment along Prune Street. In his time William Penn, founder and proprietor of Pennsylvania, had been in a debtors' gaol in London.

The west side of the Walnut Street Prison overlooked the Southeast Square of the city, now known as Washington Square. It dated from the original planning of the city, being one of the breathing spaces specified by William Penn "for the like uses of the moorsfields in London." During its first century the Square was used as the town's potter's field. After 1793 it could no longer so be used, since after its long use for the burial of paupers, deceased prisoners from the gaol, Acadians, and soldiers of the Revolution both American and British, and those who had died in the frequent scourges of small pox, the victims of the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 took up the last remaining available space—5,000 Philadelphians lost their lives that year in the epidemic.

The Prison fronted on the State House Yard, nowadays known as Independence Square, and the view from Sixth and Walnut was much as it is today, with State House Row across the Square. The State House has been preserved very closely, except that in 1793 it had no steeple, the original one having been taken down as insecure. The Liberty Bell had been taken from the belfry and placed

The James Peller Malcolm engraving of the old Walnut Street Prison, as published in England about 1800.

The location of the spot in the prison yard from which the Blanchard balloon ascended was not recorded but can be conjectured. On the eastern side of the yard was the building for solitary confinement; the walled-off debtors' apartment eliminated the extreme southern 100 feet; and scattered workshops cluttered the remainder of the southern section. There was left, near the Sixth Street wagon gate, an open space of about 100 feet by 100 feet, all of which "spaciousness" would be necessary for clearance safety. The center of this presumed, flying field was approximately 190 feet south of Walnut Street, 85 feet east of Sixth Street.



Malcom, dell'ed. 2^a

The Jail. Philad.

in the brick tower lower down. The clock up to that time never had been in the tower, but was on the west end of the main building, with a great white marble case which gave it the appearance of a gigantic grandfather's clock. In those days the brick wall around the Yard was higher, and there was a high gate on the Walnut Street side, opposite the prison.

There were two reasons why the city fathers granted the aeronaut the use of the prison yard for beginning his air voyage.

Two things were essential to Blanchard. One was protection for his balloon from the molestations of a curious public. And the other was "a sum which might lighten the burthen of my expences." These expenses amounted to 500 guineas. Subscriptions were necessary through the sale of tickets at \$5 and \$2. The city fathers gave him the use of the gaolyard "on account of its spaciousness" in a town closely knitted with trees. The prison's high walls thus curiously provided Philadelphia with its first stadium. The gate receipts, however, amounted to only \$405, for while the city's entire population witnessed the ascension, most of the spectators economically viewed it from outside the walls, their gratitude later subscribing only \$263 more.

Blanchard had written in advance to the newspaper editors:—

"Too busy to answer individually those

who wish to accompany me in my aerial voyage, I will thank you, Sir, to inform them through the medium of your paper that it is out of my power to gratify their wishes, having brought with me from Europe only 4200 weight of vitriolic acid, the quantity necessary to effect my own ascension, once. As it appears to me that most of those who do me the honour of writing on this subject are unacquainted with the increase of expense that a compliance with their request would occasion, you will be pleased to inform them that the quantity of vitrol necessary could not be found in this city and that if it could be procured it would cost at least 100 guineas.

“All my aerial companions in Europe have agreed to defray the expense, for in truth I could not well afford to sacrifice 100 guineas to gratify the curiosity of anyone. Those who are acquainted with the nature of the experiment know it is expensive in proportion to the heavy bodies to be raised.”

A modern chemist explains Blanchard's supply of vitriolic acid:—“A simple laboratory method of preparing hydrogen is by treating such metals as magnesium, zinc and iron with dilute acids. The chemical reaction is: zinc (or iron) + sulfuric acid $\longrightarrow$ iron sulfate + hydrogen. (Sulfuric acid, vitriolic acid, dil. oil of vitriol.) Hydrogen has a specific gravity (with the value of dry air as 1) of 0.06949;

*Blanchard's Vaisseau Volant, his dirigible balloon.
Sketch by M. E. Wigfield, after a 1784 engraving
in the collection of William Gerhard.*



it is therefore 14.39 times as light as air, being the lightest known gas."

One of the newspapers of that day remarked editorially that "it is to be hoped that the spectators may not crowd too near, or interrupt Mr. Blanchard whilst employed in his preparations, as it might be attended with fatal effects, should he be incommoded." The danger was from fire and explosion, as within even very recent years has been found true with zeppelins, and that is why the present immense value of helium, at that time unknown.

Back at the time of the advent of the hydrogen balloon, Blanchard had promptly seen it as the fundamental answer to the aerostatic problem, and had given up his old idea that the wings of his original *Vaisseau Volant* would support his weight. He went in wholeheartedly for the balloon principle, but he adapted the wings and rudder of his own invention to a use in making the balloon dirigible.

There is a French engraving of 1784 which shows one of his balloons with a parachute or parasol underneath, and a boat or car suspended from both balloon and parasol by a mast and by ropes. Attached to the car is a curious mechanism of a rudder and four small wings or fins. The wings, and also the parasol, are cupped by means of ribs or ropes. The explanatory note of the engraving, here repro-

duced, mentions a "handwheel to set the wings in motion."

Variations of that same idea appear in other engravings of Blanchard's various balloons, but he seems to have given it up in time. The frontispiece of his "Journal of My Forty-Fifth Ascension" must have been engraved at his direction, but it leaves us somewhat puzzled as to the actual appearance of his Philadelphia balloon. The sketch shows it with stripes, whereas the newspapers wrote of "a yellowish color'd silk highly varnished," and it does not show the "bladders which surrounded it (the car) wherewith I had provided myself in case of a forced descent on the water." But there is no sign of the old wing and rudder mechanism visible in the 1793 picture.

However, we find him saying in his 1793 Journal, when speaking of Montgolfier's invention of the balloon, "It was my good fortune to contribute to it, by the multiplicity of my experiments; I have even, I trust, developed and enlarged the sublime idea, by subjecting the aerostat to fixed and certain laws, by which, at any height in the atmosphere, I might direct its motions at pleasure."

What was the nature of those fixed and certain laws to which he refers is disclosed in an editorial, based on an interview with Blanchard, printed in the American Daily

Advertiser on Christmas Day of 1792:—

“Now as to its motion at pleasure. Experience has taught Mr. Blanchard that at all times there are at different heights in the atmosphere different and contrary currents of air. This we have often been enabled to judge of ourselves from the earth. We have often seen the higher clouds move in one, the lower in a contrary, direction, while the weathercock agreed with neither. Mr. Blanchard has always found at different heights contrary currents and is so well convinced that this is constantly the case that he declares he would rather ascend in his balloon, the wind blowing from the quarter in which he would wish to go, than towards it; as by rising above the lower current, he would be certain of finding a favorable one above and at the same time be at such a height from the surface of the earth, as to have nothing to fear from its roughness.

“Since this is the case the difficulty of giving motion to the balloon in almost any direction is remote and the general velocity of the wind assures a quick voyage.’

“In the present infancy of the art, the aeronaut can rise and fall at pleasure by throwing away ballast and suffering inflammable air to escape so as to take advantage of any current of air he may choose. It is, however, desirable that these operations could

be performed without a diminution of the energy of the balloon and this seems by no means impracticable. Supposing the aerostat in perfect equilibrium with the air a very trifling mechanical force properly applied would be sufficient to effect both purposes."

In an open letter to the newspapers Blanchard wrote: "You wish to know . . . where you may order your horses to stand that you may without losing time follow the aerostat. If the day is calm, there will be full time to leave the prison court without precipitation as in that case I shall ascend perpendicularly; but if the wind blows, permit me, gentlemen, to advise you not to attempt following, for the swiftest horses will be unable to keep up with me, especially in a country so intersected with rivers and so covered with woods."

Three days after Blanchard's balloon ascension, the play at the theatre in Southwark was "concluded with a fly, by Mr. West, 'Neck or Nothing, or Harlequin's Flight to and from the Gods.' He rises from the back of the stage and ascends into the gallery, and returns head-foremost back again over the pitt." This obviously was a travesty upon the air voyage. The same day the newspaper advertised "Just published reflections of Mr. Blanchard's forty-fifth aerial flight on the 9th of January, 1793; to be had at every principal bookseller and stationer shop in Philadelphia, 5½."

Shortly after the day of the famous voyage Governor Mifflin gave the aeronaut permission to construct a rotunda or exhibition room on the Governor's lot on Chestnut Street, where he exhibited a balloon with which he proposed to make a forty-sixth ascension, but while it was there it was damaged by stones thrown from the outside, not having the protection of the prison yard. However, he twice sent up from the rotunda a balloon and parachute, with a dog, a cat, and a squirrel in the car, a slow match fixed to release the parachute when the balloon reached a certain height. As before, he lost money on the ventures, for although the crowd of spectators was great they remained outside the gate.

In view of the aeronaut's troubles with his finances, there is irony in the thought that he had in his pocket a prospective fortune. More than a century later French philatelists were offering a fantastic price for his letter from Washington, arguing that it was the world's first air-mail letter. Its whereabouts were unknown.

He gave a third exhibition, with better success, this time showing "a wonderful carriage propelled by an automaton in the shape of an eagle chained to the tongue of the carriage and guided by the traveler." This vehicle could without the assistance of horses "travel as fast as the best post-chaise, not only travel

on all roads, but likewise ascend any mountain which is accessible to any common carriage.”

There were other entertainments in the city. There was Rickett's Circus, on High Street, “the performance of Mr. Ricketts, the celebrated equestrian.” There was Peale's Museum, Charles Willson Peale's natural history museum on Lombard Street. There were two theatres, the Old Theatre, on Cedar Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, the other called the New Theatre, at Sixth and Chestnut Streets.

There was, said an advertisement, “a wild she Buffaloe to be seen every day at Alexander Clay's Black Horse, Market Street, 11 d. each grown person, and 5½ piece for children.” And there was Bowen's Wax Work Exhibition, at Eighth and High. It was with the proprietor, Daniel Bowen, that Blanchard boarded, at 9 N. Eighth Street, around the corner from where dwelt Thomas Jefferson.

The aeronaut attempted to get hold of twelve cylinder tubes of a six-foot length, with which he thought he could fill his balloon more readily, but after a failure to obtain what he needed he finally left the city and the country.

Blanchard may be said to have ended his life while engaged in aviation, for it was during his sixtieth ascension, in 1808, at the Hague, that he was seized with the illness from which he never recovered. He died in 1809.

His wife, Marie Madeleine Sophie Armand Blanchard, was an enthusiast in flying on her own account. She was one of the most noted woman aeronauts of her time, made numerous ascents in France and Italy, to the admiration of Napoleon. She was killed in a fall from her burning balloon, in 1819.

Now we come to the details of the first air voyage in America as narrated by Blanchard himself, in his "Journal of My Forty-Fifth Ascension, Being the First Performed in America." An additional reason for republishing the Journal, apart from its factual information, is that it has been something of a hidden classic.

Blanchard himself was without English: witness the episode of the usefulness of Washington's passport letter. Who it was who translated Blanchard's Journal into English we do not know; whoever he was he managed to do something more than merely interpret the narrative. He successfully conveyed the spirit of Blanchard. Between the story itself and its translation the man is revealed as a most delightful person.

He is no dry-as-dust scientist; he is inspired. At the time of his forty-fifth aerial adventure, ten years after his first, he is still excited and interested at every moment of his life in the air. He is a friendly man, an honest, modest fellow, an enthusiastic Frenchman, an eloquent

writer. He is the gallant aeronaut waving his plumed hat, together with a double flag, as the ascension begins.

In the Journal we see this man, who for ten years had been the idol of fascinated balloon-watching assemblies in Europe, who had exhibited his skill before crowned heads, now meeting General Washington in honest hero-worship. We see the aeronaut who from the Old World apostrophizes America and from the air above the New World apostrophizes his own native land, to both enjoining liberty and vision.

We see the man in the balloon above Philadelphia astonished at the great size of the watching crowd, the aerial traveler giving his technique of the ballooning, consoling with the flock of flying pigeons upon whose territory he is trespassing. We see him gazing down with delight upon the river below, philosophizing on history, comforting the dog who is his nervous passenger, hastening to try the experiments requested by scientific friends, snatching a hasty luncheon in mid-air, tentatively feeling for a landing before the mist thickens, skillfully effecting a landing in an open space in the woods, enjoying the amazement of the country men, diplomatically proffering the conciliatory juice of the grape, submitting his passport while the balloon is being deflated and folded, discovering himself a poor horse-

Photographic fac simile of page 19 of the Blanchard Journal, as it was printed in 1793, which may be compared with our fac simile by type. The original Journal was printed on wet paper, which accounts for the heavier impression.

WHAT sweet ecstasies take possession of the soul of a mortal, who leaving the terrestrial abode, soars into the ethereal regions ! and to what a degree of felicity would these transports be raised, by the exuberant and variegated aspect of nature, when she, in the season of her fecundity, spreads before the eyes of the husbandman the reward of his labor in the rich and various produce of the earth !

IF the Philosopher of Geneva tasted with so much delight the pleasure of his sentimental meditations on the high summits of the mountains of Valais ; with how many more new beauties would his fruitful genius have enriched the fields of imagination, had he been transported into these higher regions. I myself should have forgotten my earthly existence, had I not recollected some observations, which several learned gentlemen had requested me to make.

AT 10^h. 36 - 37 - 38^m. I found that I was in a state of perfect equilibrium in the midst of a stagnant fluid ; I made haïte to avail myself of this happy circumstance, in order to execute the commissions I had charged myself with.

1st. I BEGAN with emptying the six botttles which Doctor Wistar had put into my *car*, containing divers liquors ; they were all filled with that atmospherical air wherein I was floating, and were stopped up hermetically, as the accuracy of the experiment required.

man, sampling the potatoes of the Jerseys, making his triumphant return to the city and making his report to the President and politely offering him the colors.

His whole account of his sentimental journey "traversing the etherial regions" is rendered with true Gallic verve. It is a vivid piece of writing, and one could wish that Christopher Columbus had written a Log of the *Santa Maria* to match the Journal of this Columbus of the air.

In reprinting the Journal we have faithfully reproduced the original typography in type fac simile, only omitting the old confusing use of the long s,—the *f* for an *s*, to spare the reader's unaccustomed eyes. The Journal was originally set in foundry type, the old style Caslon. The reprint is set in monotype Caslon 337. The original Journal copied is the one in the Ridgway Library of the Library Company of Philadelphia, except for the copy of the frontispiece engraving in the collection of the American Philosophical Society. We are indebted to both libraries, as well as the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, for many courtesies in our research.

Preceding the Journal we show you the newspaper advertisement which announced the First Air Voyage in America.

M. Blanchard's

FORTY-FIFTH AERIAL FLIGHT

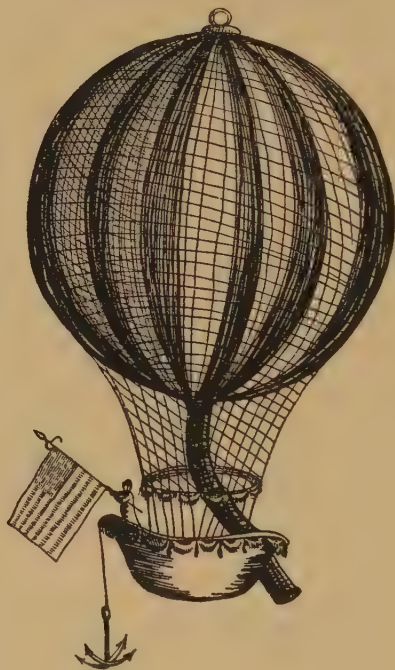
Is positively fixed for Wednesday, January 9th, in the Prison Court, at 10 in the morning precisely, *weather permitting.*

Those who have subscribed on the blank subscription cards distributed thro' the city, are requested to send them to Oeller's Hotel, and those who wish to subscribe, may apply at the same place, until the 3d of January inclusively. Price of subscription, Five Dollars.

December 26.

mw&ftf

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA



45.th Ascention and the first
made in America January
9.th 1793. at Philadelphia
39° 56' N. Latitude by
M.^r J. P. Blanchard.

45.^e ascension et la premiere
faite en Amerique Le 9 Jan-
vier 1793 a Philadelphie 39
56' Latitude N. par.
M.^r J. P. Blanchard.

JOURNAL
OF MY
FORTY-FIFTH
ASCENSION,

BEING THE FIRST PERFORMED IN

AMERICA,

ON THE NINTH OF JANUARY, 1793.

Æthereum tranabit iter, quo numine BLANCHARD?

Impavidus, sortem non timet Icariam.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY CHARLES CIST, No. 104. NORTH

SECOND-STREET, M,DCC,XCIII.

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING so happily succeeded in the 45th attempt of my aerial flight, in the presence of the enlightened citisens of Philadelphia, I thought I could still afford them some pleasure, by offering to them an accurate description of the operations preparatory to this ascension, and by acquainting them with my various situation during this excursion, as well as with the motives which induced me to a return, and the means I made use of to accomplish it.

I will then account for the thoughts and feelings which agitated my breast at the time of my ascension: I will display them, with confidence, to those candid and feeling men, whose eye traced me across the vast expanse of the aerial regions.

To such as are not unacquainted with the mechanism of the aerostat, some of these details may appear trifling and superfluous; but as I felt them, I will therefore describe them: nor do I think I should be justifiable in concealing from the curious public any part of the operations which attended so extraordinary an experiment, of which they for the first time witnessed the complete success.

And here I request the indulgence of my readers for the style of my narrative—Elegance is not what I aim at in this performance: Truth is intended as its sole ornament.

I N S C R I B E D

T O

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

O F

A M E R I C A,

THE PATRON OF LIBERTY, THE LAWS,

AND THE FINE ARTS;

BY HIS MOST HUMBLE,

AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

BLANCHARD.

JOURNAL.

I HAD performed my forty-fourth ascension—All Europe was filled with the glory of the famous MONTGOLFIER—The principal cities of the old world had applauded the happy success of so brilliant a discovery. It was my good fortune to contribute to it, by the multiplicity of my experiments; I have even, I trust, developed and enlarged the sublime idea, by subjecting the aerostat to fixed and certain laws, by which, at any height in the atmosphere, I might direct its motions at pleasure—In a word, I enjoyed a satisfaction which seemed to leave me nothing to wish for. I then thought of terminating my aerial excursions; and recalling to my mind my original situation, I wished to devote in a peaceable retreat the most precious moments of my leisure to collecting together my aerological observations, in order to offer them as fresh food to the eager thirst of mankind after new sources of knowledge.

THIS first intention of mine was soon altered by an uneasy emotion which seized my breast. The New World, so interesting by its situation, offered to my emulation an attraction which I could not resist. This Hemisphere had as yet only heard of the brilliant triumph of aerostation; and the

people who inhabit it, appeared to me worthy of enjoying the sublime spectacle that it affords.*

YE People of America, ye wise and happy Nation, who knowing the full value of liberty, are not insensible to that of a just submission to the laws, you attracted all my attention, and the desire of beholding you in the full enjoyment of the blessings of liberty, under the protection of your newly established government, fired my soul as much as the wish of acquiring some glory among you.

My project was as soon executed as formed. Fearful however of not finding in the new countries, which I was going to explore, a sufficient quantity of materials necessary to my experiments, my departure was delayed only by the time requisite to have them forwarded from London to Hamburg, where I then was.

My orders being punctually executed, and every thing succeeding to the best of my wishes, I had the satisfaction to embark with all my apparatus upon the ship *Ceres*, Captain *Marsh*, bound to Philadelphia—On the 30th of September, 1792, we sailed, and landed here on the 9th of December, in the same year.

* On my arrival in this city, I was informed that some experiments of this kind had already been attempted, the ill success of which had disappointed the expectation of the subscribers.—I now congratulate myself upon having proved to the citizens of Philadelphia the truth of what I had advanced.

How superior to all the reports of fame Philadelphia appeared! This city so happily characterised by the name it bears, still preserves, whether collectively or separately viewed, the glorious stamp of her philosophical founder. The simplicity of her architecture, the order and regularity of her plan, the size and cleanliness of the streets, and the conveniences they afford to the public, every thing reminds us at the first view of the celebrated man, who chose it should bear a name analogous to his philanthropic feelings, and gives us also a lively recollection of the wisdom of her rulers, as well as of the simple and decent manners of her inhabitants.

I MADE it my duty, nay I was proud of attempting in this metropolis my first aerial ascension in America, and I derived from it the most sanguine expectations of a complete success. The gracious reception with which I was welcomed by the hero of liberty, General GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States, the easy and cheerful access I had to General THOMAS MIFFLIN, Governor of Pennsylvania, the eagerness which I thought I discovered in the public to see MONTGOLFIER's sublime discovery reduced to practice, every thing seemed to tell me that I might with confidence display the mechanism of an aerostat, to make it soar above the clouds, and convince the New World that man's ingenuity is not confined to earth alone, but opens to him new and certain roads in the vast expanse of heaven.

I soon gave notice to the public of my intention, and immediately proposed a subscription for a sum which might lighten the burthen of my expenses.* I waited not for its being filled: I hastened to announce the time of an experiment, fixed for the 9th. of January, 1793, at 10 o'clock in the morning. However, zealous as I was to answer the public expectations, I was sensible, that as a foreigner, unknown in a country, with whose very language I am unacquainted, I should have been exposed to great difficulties in the execution of my design, had not the magistrates of the city stepped forward to countenance my design, by allowing me to make use of the prison court as the most suitable place, on account of its spaciousness. I am also much indebted to the zeal of Mr. Benjamin Nones, who by his kind assistance accelerated my

* These expenses are indeed extraordinary, both on account of the quantity of the elementary ingredients of the gas, which are often scarce in the country where the experiment is made, as prudence requires to have a good provision of it at hand, to insure success against the unforeseen accidents which chemical operations are subject to; and on account of the instruments and large apparatus which are necessary to such an experiment — Again, the expenses are increased by the size of the balloon in proportion to the force intended to be given to it. — I make this observation to forewarn the *Amateurs* of this art, and to caution them against exposing themselves to a rash undertaking. This is perhaps the reason of the ill success of many in Europe, and the cause why the improvement of this ingenious discovery has been retarded; nor do I think the case will be speedily altered, if Chymistry and Mechanicks in concert do not succeed in simplifying the means; in which enquiry I am at present steadily employed.

preparations. Every thing seemed to succeed to my wishes, and to ensure my success. The day appointed for my experiment rose, one of the finest of the new year; I will also reckon it among the happiest of my life. It was presaged by a calm night, a serene sky, spangled with ten thousand glittering stars, whose light was eclipsed only by that of the returning sun.

AT 4 - 5 - 6 o'clock in the morning, by Reaumur's thermometer $0^{\text{d}} \frac{5}{10}$, Fahrenheit's $30^{\text{d}} \frac{8}{10}$. I had already repaired to the place of my operations, had examined every thing minutely, and left nothing undone to answer the public expectation. To be exactly acquainted with the temperature of the air, and with the result of the various changes of the weather was a matter of great moment with me; I therefore compared my observations with those that were made by my friend Mr. Peter Legaux, and I found they perfectly agreed.

FROM 7 to 8 o'clock, the sky being overcast and hazy, the higher current of air setting from the E. N. N. and the lower from S. S. W. Reaumur's thermometer standing at 1^{d} , Fahrenheit's at $35^{\text{d}} \frac{4}{10}$ —my balloon was lying on the ground, resting on its folds, when the operation commenced; and the inflammable air began to expand it by degrees.

AT 9 o'clock the mist dissipated, the sky was wrapt in thin clouds, pervious to the rays of the sun; wind S. W. Reaumur's thermometer $1^{\text{d}} \frac{5}{10}$, Fahrenheit's $35^{\text{d}} \frac{4}{10}$.

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9, the sun which broke in through the clouds, dissipated them in such a manner that they appeared no more than cobwebs on the irradiated atmosphere—A gentle westerly breeze—Reaumur's thermometer 2^{d} , Fahrenheit's $36^{\text{d}} \frac{5}{10}$.

THE hour fixed for my departure now drew near, and I was anxious to keep my word with a numerous people, whom repeated discharges of the artillery of the city had already forewarned of the execution of my experiment; I then disposed in order all the apparatus requisite for my observations: I adapted Reaumur's thermometer to the center of an excellent barometer, * in order to rectify, with the greatest possible exactness, the degrees of expansion or condensation, which the mercury in the barometer should undergo by the changes in the temperature of the air. The altitude, as corrected at that time, was 29 inches, 6 lines, $\frac{6}{10}$, English measure.

* This barometer, which had been kindly lent to me by Mr. Benjamin Franklin Bache, was phosphoric and perfectly freed from air; the interior diameter was 2 lines 5-10, with a bent reservoir, and moving tube that might easily be brought back again to its horizontal line, when the lightness or heaviness of air should either depress or raise the column of mercury. The measurement of heights, as well as of the differences of horizon, is one of the finest uses to which a barometer can be applied—Its usefulness is generally acknowledged—It not only serves to measure the heights of mountains, and the depth of subterranean caves, and to ascertain, by accurate observations, made at very different degrees of elevation, the density of the air; but it also indicates the variations and the absolute weight of the atmosphere.

At three quarters past 9, the sky being clear, a light breeze from the W. N. W.—by Reaumur's 3^{d} by Fahrenheit $38^{\text{d}} \frac{8}{10}$ —corrected altitude of the barometer 29 inches, 6 lines $\frac{7}{16}$.

At 10 o'clock, the sky was still finer and clearer; a light breeze from the W. N. W.—Reaumur's thermometer in the sun 7^{d} Fahrenheit's $47^{\text{d}} \frac{8}{10}$ —corrected altitude of the barometer 29 inches, 7 lines.

ALREADY the balloon, inflated by the inflammable gas, lifted itself from the ground, and having assumed its spherical form, was equally pressed on all the points of its concave surface—Already specifically lighter than the column of air which it had displaced, it hovered majestically in the middle of that fluid in a vertical situation, striving to break loose from the fastening which held it by its base, and reluctantly kept it down. Repeated experiments have made these various circumstances so many *data* from which to determine the moment of my departure.

At 9 minutes after 10, the sky being clear, serene and propitious, little wind and nearly calm at the surface of the earth; Reaumur's thermometer in the sun $10^{\text{d}} \frac{5}{10}$, Fahrenheit's $55^{\text{d}} \frac{6}{10}$; corrected altitude of the barometer 29 inches, 7 lines $\frac{2}{10}$, English measure, I affixed to the aerostat my *car*, laden with ballast, meteorological instruments, and some refreshments, with which the anxiety of my friends had provided me. I hastened to take leave of the PRESIDENT, and of Mr. TERNAN,

Minister Plenipotentiary of France to the United States. I then received from the PRESIDENT the most flattering mark of his good will in the passport * which he was pleased to deliver to me with his own hand. I never felt the value of glory so much as I did in that moment, in the presence of a Hero, whom she had constantly attended at the head of armies, and with whom she still presided over the councils of his country.

THE moment of my departure was announced by the last discharge of the artillery; I then ascended my car, studied the proportions of aerial gravities, and threw out as much of my ballast as

* GEORGE WASHINGTON, *President of the United States of America,*

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME.

THE bearer hereof, Mr. Blanchard a citizen of France, proposing to ascend in a balloon from the city of Philadelphia, at 10 o'clock, A. M. this day, to pass in such direction and to descend in such place as circumstances may render most convenient—THESE are therefore to recommend to all citizens of the United States, and others, that in his passage, descent, return or journeying elsewhere, they oppose no hindrance or molestation to the said Mr. Blanchard; And, that on the contrary, they receive and aid him with that humanity and good will, which may render honor to their country, and justice to an individual so distinguished by his efforts to establish and advance an art, in order to make it useful to mankind in general.

Given under my hand and seal at the city of Philadelphia, this ninth day of January, one thousand seven hundred and ninety three, and of the independence of America the seventeenth.

(Seal.)

Signed GEORGE WASHINGTON.

appeared necessary to leave the aerostat at liberty, and to render my ascent certain. I soon found myself possessed of every requisite; I felt myself balanced at 15 inches from the ground. This was all I wished for; I requested Messieurs Nassy and Legaux, who held the aerostat, to let it loose.

My ascent was perpendicular and so easy, that I had time to enjoy the different impressions which agitated so many sensible and interesting persons, who surrounded the scene of my depature, and to salute them with my flag, which was ornamented on one side with the armoric bearings of the United States, and on the other with the three colors, so dear to the French nation. Accustomed as I have long been, to the pompous scenes of numerous assemblies, yet I could not help being surprised and astonished, when, elevated at a certain height over the city, I turned my eyes towards the immense number of people, which covered the open places, the roofs of the houses, the steeples, the streets and the roads, over which my flight carried me in the free space of the air. What a sight! How delicious for me to enjoy it! This people naturally serious and reflecting, whose mirth is so much more true and rational, as it is not apt to give away to the transports of the moment, shewed from all parts the most unequivocal marks of astonishment and satisfaction: I, for a long time, followed their rapid motions: for a long time could I hear the cries of joy which rent the air: I thought myself carried on the vows of their

hearts. I had at that instant nothing but the success of my voyage to answer for my gratitude, and the waving of my colours to express the same. At present I make it my duty to express the same in this feeble essay; may it be agreeable to the inhabitants of a city, whose approbation is so glorious for me.

I STILL continued to rise; the calm state of the atmosphere, whereinto I had now launched, offered no kind of difficulty, and I followed the ascending motion of my aerostat with a gradual uniformity, at once, easy and majestic.

I WAS at a perpendicular height of 200 fathoms, when I felt a somewhat stronger breeze spring up, which carried me in an easterly direction towards the Delaware: here I met a numerous and thick flock of wild pigeons: they seemed to be much frightened. Alas! it was never my intention in traversing the ethereal regions, to disturb the feathered inhabitants thereof: they separated into two different parties and left a passage open for me. I soon perceived them again at a great distance from me. I ascended constantly, being carried towards the south-east by a light and pleasant breeze. At 10^h 16^m. I let go my anchor, to serve as a point of observation, keeping the same course, though rather a little more to the southward.

At 10^h 19 - 20 - 21^m. bearing constantly towards the S. S. E. my ascent became more rapid, owing solely to the dilatation of the inflam-

mable gas, which filled the balloon. At this moment my position was perpendicular over the middle of the Delaware, which the reflecting sunbeams painted to my eyes of a transparent white; and at the height I was then at, this river appeared to me like a ribband of the breadth of about four inches.

AT 10^h. 35^m. being now in a much more rarified fluid, and the force of the inflammable gas having increased in proportion to its dilatation, the aerostat was soon raised to the highest elevation which it is susceptible of. I had lost nothing of my ballast consisting of four bags and an half filled with sand, containing 24lb. English weight each, together 108lb. A little black dog, which a friend had entrusted to me, seemed to feel sick at this height, he attempted several times to get out of the *car*; but finding no landing-place he took the prudent part to remain quietly beside me: the whining of this little animal raised nevertheless reflections in my mind, which would have affected me very much, had not the view of the country, whose vast extent was expanded before my eyes, opened my mind to softer and more agreeable contemplations.

SEE here, said I to myself, this country for ever famous in history, which by philosophy as well as by dint of courage has acquired its liberty; its inhabitants preserve yet the primitive candor of the original virtues of nature. They felt the galling yoke of an unnatural step-mother, they undertook to shake it off. Their

cause was just; they triumphed; but how glorious did their wisdom render their victory! Having soon found that there exists no solid happiness for man living in society, but under the empire of laws, they did not suffer themselves to be agitated by abstract and metaphysical discussions, they were as virtuous as brave; knowing their own good and the means to arrive at prosperity, they knew how to realize them.

OH France! Oh my country! for ages renowned amongst the greatest nations of the universe, gratitude engages for thee the feelings of a people, which owes to thee part of its glory and of its happiness; their warmest wishes are for the success of thy arms and for thy prosperity: thou hast so often avenged the cause of nations against injustice and oppression! Oh France! delightful abode! may thy splendor still preserve its lustre in spite of the tyrants who are endeavouring to obscure it! May'st thou, conquering all obstacles, speedily reach the sublime goal to which thy fair destinies call thee! Accept my honest wishes for thy success, they are pure as the air I now breathe. Rise at last more beautiful and more glorious from the conflicts which rend thy bosom, and like the people of America, hasten to fix thy glory and thy prosperity on the wisdom and stability of thy laws!

WHAT sweet ecstasies take possession of the soul of a mortal, who leaving the terrestrial abode, soars into the ethereal regions! and to what a degree of felicity would these transports be raised, by the exuberant and variegated aspect of nature, when she, in the season of her fecundity, spreads before the eyes of the husbandman the reward of his labor in the rich and various produce of the earth!

IF the Philosopher of Geneva tasted with so much delight the pleasure of his sentimental meditations on the high summits of the mountains of Valais; with how many more new beauties would his fruitful genius have enriched the fields of imagination, had he been transported into these higher regions. I myself should have forgotten my earthly existence, had I not recollected some observations, which several learned gentlemen had requested me to make.

AT 10^h. 36 - 37 - 38^m. I found that I was in a state of perfect equilibrium in the midst of a stagnant fluid; I made haste to avail myself of this happy circumstance, in order to execute the commissions I had charged myself with.

1st. I BEGAN with emptying the six bottles which Doctor Wistar had put into my *car*, containing divers liquors; they were all filled with that atmospherical air wherein I was floating, and were stopped up hermetically, as the accuracy of the experiment required.

2^{dly}

I P A S S E D on to the observation which Doctor Rush had requested me to make upon the pulsation of the artery, when I should be arrived at my greatest height. I found it impossible to make use of the quarter-minute glass which he had provided for that purpose, but I supplied its place by an excellent second-watch; and the result of my observations gave me 92 pulsations in the minute (the average of 4 observations made at the place of my highest elevation) whereas on the ground I had experienced no more than 84 in the same given time, average of 4 observations: difference 8 pulsations more at the height of 5812 English feet, where I then was.

3^{dly}.

I H A D been requested by Doctor Glentworth to make experiments in the ethereal regions with a load-stone, which he had lent me: on the ground it raised $5\frac{1}{2}$ ounces averdupois; but at the aforesaid height it would hardly bear 4 ounces.

4^{thly}.

T H E lowest state of the mercury in the barometer after having brought its surface in its lower reservoir to its proper level and corrected its dilatation, was 69 lines $\frac{9}{16}$ French measure, or 74 lines $\frac{8}{16}$ English measure, which according to Mariot, Boyle, Deluc and Father Côte gives an elevation of 905 toises 1 foot and 6 inches (the toise at 6 feet) or 5431 feet 6 inches French

measure, and at the usual reduction 968 fathom 4 feet, or 5812 feet English measure. This was the highest elevation of my balloon, without having thrown out any of my ballast, except the liquor contained in the 6 bottles given to me by Doctor Wistar.

AT this moment ($10^h\ 38^m$) the thermometer of Reaumur 9^d Fahrenheit's $52^d\ \frac{3}{10}$ (the temperature of the air most delightful and quite extraordinary for this season of the year). These observations were made with so much the more confidence, as I enjoyed for a long time the calmest reflection. In the mean while the state of the atmosphere began to change. A whitish cloud withheld from my sight for several minutes a part of the city of Philadelphia, which appeared to me only as a most minute and microscopic object. A thick fog covered the south; towards the east, in the lower region of the atmosphere, a mist arose, which prevented me from reconnoitring the sea. I was afraid that the land-wind encreasing, might render my descent difficult; every thing induced me to accelerate it.

I STRENGTHENED my stomach with a morsel of biscuit and a glass of wine. I then locked up in the box of my *car* those of my instruments that were apt to break. My trusty companion, the little black dog, partook equally of my care. I cleared my *car* of several decorations which might have obstructed my sight. I likewise took away the bladders which surrounded it, wherewith I had

provided myself in case of a forced descent on the water. In such circumstances prudence dictates the most scrupulous precautions. Searching in this manner the interior parts of my *car*, I found at my feet a letter from Mr. Legaux and Doctor Nassy: these two friends had, without my knowledge, joined to this packet, a bottle of ether. I took a few drops of it, which refreshed me very much.

BEING now fully master of all my ways, I opened the valve of the balloon, and the aerostatic equilibrium was soon broken, but in a manner as exactly graduated, and as uniform as that which regulated my ascent. I could soon distinguish with the naked eye those large masses, which are raised above the surface of the earth. I observed a large forest; I tried to approach it—I judged it to be about 1000 or 1200 feet distant; but through my spy-glass it appeared impenetrable to me, and I gave up the idea of landing there. I now threw out a quantity of ballast sufficient to give the balloon a superior equilibrium; it rose again and I followed my course, looking for a more convenient landing-place. Thinking I had found one, I again opened the valve; the ascending force diminished; I descended obliquely in a new direction: but in this second attempt I was not more fortunate than in the first. I perceived a field covered with stumps of trees, whose stems were yet too strong not to embarrass and injure my apparel. I kept clear of it, and raising myself by throwing out more ballast, my direction was such that I could discover a clear

spot in the midst of a thick wood, that is to say, an opening large and free enough to permit me to descend without any kind of danger: I attempted it for the third time.

I THEN took the string of the valve in my hand, and letting out the inflammable air in such proportion, that my course, pressed by a proportionable quantity of the yet remaining ballast, terminated in a direction of a curve of 45 degrees. I soon found myself at the height of about 80 feet above the surface of the ground; I reached it like a bird in full flight; the flexible limbs of the trees around me gave way to the strong pressure of my apparel; I landed at last and set my foot on ground at 10^h. 56^m. A. M.

I IMMEDIATELY searched my instruments; they were all well preserved, except the barometer, which on account of its length I could not put into the box of my seat, and which I found broken. I delivered at the same time the dog from his confinement, he ran immediately to drink the muddy water from a neighbouring pool, and returned directly to me. There remained of my provisions about 5 or 6 pounds of biscuit and two bottles and a half of wine: this resource made me easy in a place, which was entirely unknown to me, and where the horizon was on all sides concealed from my view.

WITH the compass in my hand I formed already plans, how to effect my return, after I should have secured my apparatus against accidents, when

I heard a noise which informed me of the presence of some person near me. It was indeed a country-man, an inhabitant of this neighbourhood, who having seen an extraordinary phenomenon in the air, had advanced towards the spot, where he supposed it had descended. I spied him and enjoyed his whole surprize, when he saw through a tuft of trees such a monstrous machine, balancing on itself, and sinking in proportion, as the spirit wherewith it was animated left it. He seemed to be frightened, and I was afraid he would go away again. I let him hear my voice, inviting him to draw near, but he either did not understand me or was retained by a certain distrust; and at that time I could not quit my balloon. I did better; recollecting that the exhilarating juice of the grape was always amongst mankind the happiest sign of friendship and conciliation, I shewed him a bottle of wine. So much eagerness on my part inspired him with confidence; he approached, I invited him to drink, he would not venture, I then drank first, and he followed my example. Becoming soon familiar, he assisted me in my operations; when another country-man, armed with a gun, came to the spot. Never did I see the expression of astonishment so striking as in the features of this man: he dropped his gun and lifted up his hands towards heaven: how I wished to be able to understand him! The first country-man then came from under the folds of the balloon, where he had been at work; he spoke to the new-comer, and

persuaded him to draw near with confidence. Come hither, said he, (as it has been explained to me afterwards) this is an honest man who has descended here, he has excellent wine, whereof he has given me to drink already; he has a certificate from our WASHINGTON, he has shewn it to me; but as I cannot read, come here and read it. Whilst these picturesque scenes were acting, I saw two women and several men on horseback arrive, who expressed as much pleasure as surprize, to see me thus in the midst of my colossal apparatus, which I was busy to arrange and put in order, for the purpose of facilitating its carriage. I could not, nor did I know how to answer all the friendly questions which they asked me; my passport served me instead of an interpreter. In the midst of a profound silence was it read with a loud and audible voice. How dear the name of WASHINGTON is to this people! with what eagerness they gave me all possible assistance, in consequence of his recommendation! My balloon was soon folded up without any accident and put into my car, which four men took upon their shoulders and carried about 200 yards to a small house, which I did not expect so near. A gentleman offered me his horse, but not being sufficiently acquainted with the vivacity of this animal, I was soon obliged to dismount, and would have greatly preferred to return in the same manner as I came. I walked afoot at a good rate, followed by a numerous and jovial company, which increased in proportion as

we advanced. We arrived at a neighbouring house, where they offered me some excellent potatoes; but whether this dish was not to my taste, or that I was too eager to reach Philadelphia before night, my stomach rejected these kind offers. I had a certificate of my descent drawn*. My apparatus was then put on a cart, I mounted a horse not quite so spirited as the first, and proceeded in company of a great number of horsemen, 3 miles, to a tavern, where a dinner was prepared for us. It was here that I had the good luck to meet Jonathan Penrose, Esquire, who kindly determined not to quit me: I accepted with pleasure a seat, which he offered me in his carriage, to bring me to the banks of the Delaware; we then crossed the river. When we arrived at this side, we were 3 miles from the city of Philadelphia, here my generous companion had another carriage ready, which conveyed us to his house in Southwark. Whilst I took some refreshment, Mr. Pen-

* THESE may certify, that we the subscribers saw the bearer, Mr. Blanchard, settle in his balloon in Deptford township, county of Gloucester, in the state of New-Jersey, about fifteen miles from Philadelphia, about 10 o'clock 56 minutes, A. M. Witness our hands the ninth day of January, Anno Domini, 1793.

*Everard Bolton,
Joseph Griffith,
Joseph Cheesman,
Samuel Taggart,
Amos Castell,
Zara North.*

rose ordered another carriage, wherein he had the kindness to conduct me to my lodgings, where I arrived at 7 o'clock*. My first care was to go and present my respects to President WASHINGTON, and to inform him of the happy effects of the passport he had been pleased to grant me. I had the honor to offer him my colours, which he politely accepted, and thereby acquired a fresh claim to my gratitude. From thence I waited on Mr. TERNANT, the patriotic minister of the French Republic to the United States, and his reception was such as might have been expected from the worthy Representative of a nation, who places her chief glory in cherishing and protecting the sciences and the fine arts.

B L A N C H A R D ,

Adopted Citizen of the principal cities
in Europe, Pensioner of the French
Nation, and member and corre-
spondent of several academies
and literary societies.

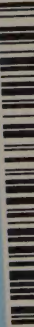
* Citizens of Philadelphia, who followed Mr. Blanchard in his 45th ascension and escorted him to Philadelphia after his descent, January 9, 1793.

Jonathan Penrose, Esquire,
and his son *Thomas,*
James Smith,
Henry Moileure,
Robert Wharton,
A Person, name unknown.

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